

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



Department of Agricultural Resources

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NOTICE

Pursuant to the provisions of the Rights-of-Way Management Regulations, 333 CMR 11:00, in order to apply herbicides to control vegetation along electric utility rights-of-way, a 5-year Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) and a Yearly Operational Plan (YOP) must be approved by the Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR). Therefore, notice of receipt of a YOP and procedures for public review is hereby given as required by Section 11.06(3).

A Yearly Operational Plan for Northeast Utilities (Western Massachusetts Electric Company, Holyoke Water Power Company, Holyoke Power and Electric Company) has been submitted to the Department.

Western Massachusetts Electric Company and Holyoke Water Power Company and Holyoke Power and Electric Company have submitted the following summary of their Yearly Operational Plan (YOP):

The YOP describes vegetation maintenance work to be done on transmission line rights-of-way and distribution line rights-of-way. Maps identify the location of rights-of-way scheduled for treatment in 2013. Sensitive areas not readily identifiable in the field are located on these maps including public surface water supplies, and public ground water supply wells and their primary recharge area. Private drinking water supply wells reported by the municipality and made available to the applicant are specified in the YOP.

Herbicide methods including application rates, carriers and adjuvants are presented according to the herbicide application technique and appropriate location. Alternative woody vegetation control procedures are designated as cutting without herbicide treatment and options precluding herbicide use. The companies which will perform the herbicide treatment are listed and identified in the notification given at least 30 days prior to herbicide treatment. Additionally, herbicide applications to rights-of-way in 2013 are subject to a "newspaper-notification" requirement. Target vegetation capable of interfering with the conductors or access is described in terms of desirable and undesirable species. The individual(s) representing the applicant supervising the YOP are provided. Flagging methods to designate sensitive areas on the right-of-way are described with corresponding sketches for public groundwater supply wells, public surface water supplies and wetlands. Herbicide fact sheets as approved by the Department, as well as procedures and locations for handling, mixing, and loading herbicide concentrates are included. Local emergency planning committees are listed for emergency notification of municipal officials.

Municipalities and sites identified in the Northeast Utilities YOP as locations where treatment of rights-of-way with herbicides will be carried out during the calendar year 2013 are:

SCHEDULED WORK by TOWN

2013 Scheduled Vegetation Maintenance Work

Scheduled work by town:

Note: T - #'s designate transmission lines scheduled for work.

D - #'s designate bulk-supply distribution lines scheduled for work.

"Brush" followed by a street name identifying location of brush.

"Touch-up" designates a touch-up application only

"Vines" treatments specific to vines climbing on poles or equipment

Distribution

TOWN	Work Locations	Touch-up Locations	Vines
Agawam	D52 Agawam to Suffield St.	D47 Bear Hole Tap D44 Eastern States	Roadsides
Amherst	D1 Podick – UMass D10 Amherst – Mill St	D4 Midway – South Amherst D11 Lanes Quarry-Bay Rd	Roadsides
Ashfield			Roadsides
Becket			Roadsides
Bernardston			Roadsides
Blandford	D27 Blandford - Huntington		Roadsides
Chesterfield			Roadsides
Colrain			Roadsides
Conway	D24 Deerfield-Conway		Roadsides
Cummington			Roadsides
Dalton		D40 Crane Tap, Dalton Sub	Roadsides
Deerfield	D24 Deerfield-Conway	D13 Cumberland-Route 5	Roadsides
Easthampton		D4 Midway – So Amherst	Roadsides
Gill		D18 Montague-Mt Hermon	Roadsides
Granby		D4 Midway – So Amherst	
Granville			Roadsides
Greenfield	D12 Cumberland-Gardner Falls D16 Cumberland-Greenfield	D13 Cumberland-Rt 5 D21 Montague-Overland D68 Greenfield-Main St	Roadsides
Hinsdale			Roadsides
Hadley	D1 Podick - UMass	D4 Midway – So Amherst	Roadsides
Hatfield			Roadsides
Huntington	D27 Blandford - Huntington		Roadsides
Lanesborough			Roadsides
Lee		D41 Pleasant- Fairview	Roadsides
Lenox		D39 Pomeroy-E. New Lenox	Roadsides
Leverett			Roadsides
Leyden			Roadsides
Longmeadow			Roadsides
Ludlow	D50 Red Bridge		Roadsides
Montague	D22 Lake Pleasant Tap	D18 Montague-Mt Hermon D21 Montague-Overland	Roadsides
Montgomery			Roadsides
New Ashford			Roadsides
Northfield			Roadsides
Otis			Roadsides

Pelham			Roadsides
Pittsfield	D42 Clark Rd – North St. D37 Oswald – Rte 20	D40 Crane Tap, Dalton Sub D39 Pomeroy-E. New Lenox	Roadsides
Plainfield			Roadsides
Richmond			Roadsides
Russell	Rte 23 Roadside Brush	Rte 20 Roadside Brush	Roadsides
Sandisfield		Rte 57 Roadside Brush	Roadsides
Shelburne	D12 Cumberland-Gardner Falls		Roadsides
South Hadley		D4 Midway – So Amherst	
Southampton			Roadsides
Southwick			Roadsides
Springfield			Roadsides
Sunderland			Roadsides
Tolland			Roadsides
Tyringham			Roadsides
West Springfield		D47 Bear Hole Tap, D44 Eastern States	Roadsides
Westhampton			Roadsides
Whately			Roadsides

Transmission

TOWN	Work Locations	Touch-up Locations
Agawam		WT-22 Elm – Agawam – West Springfield Station – Piper - CT River WT-24 – Agawam – Franconia – Ludlow - CT Line
Amherst		
Becket	WT-33 Pleasant JCT. - Blandford	
Blandford	WT-33 Pleasant JCT - Blandford, Blandford - Southwick	
Chicopee		WT-21 Midway – Mount Tom – Fairmont – Holyoke – CT River WT-23 Orchard – East Springfield – Ludlow Lines
Deerfield		
East Longmeadow		WT-24 Agawam – Franconia – Ludlow –CT Line
Easthampton	WT-32 Midway - Elm	WT-21 Midway – Mount Tom – Fairmont – Holyoke – CT River
Granville	WT-32 Cobble Mt. – Pochassic WT-33 Blandford - Southwick	
Hampden		WT-24 Agawam – Franconia – Ludlow – CT Line
Holyoke		WT-21 Midway – Mount Tom – Fairmont – Holyoke – CT River
Lee	WT-31 Pleasant – Woodland WT-33 Pleasant JCT. - Blandford	
Lenox	WT-31 Oswald - Woodland	
Longmeadow		WT-24 Agawam – Franconia – Ludlow –CT Line

Ludlow		WT-23 Orchard – East Springfield – Ludlow Lines
Otis	WT-33 Pleasant JCT. - Blandford	
Pittsfield	WT-31 Doreen - G.E. - Oswald - Woodland	
Russell	WT-32 Cobble MTN.- Pochassic WT-33 Blandford-Southwick	
South Hadley		WT-21 Midway – Mount Tom – Fairmont – Holyoke – CT River
Southampton	WT-32 Gunn - Buck Pond	
Southwick	WT-33 Blandford - CT Line	
Springfield		WT-23 Orchard – East Springfield – Ludlow Lines
West Springfield		WT-22 Elm – Agawam – West Springfield Station – Piper - CT River
Westfield		WT-22 Elm – Agawam – West Springfield Station – Piper - CT River
Wilbraham		WT -24 Agawam – Franconia – Ludlow – CT Line

Public Review

The Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR), in particular, seeks the verification of sensitive area locations reported in the YOP. The Department itself has a limited ability to survey the geography, land use, and the water supplies in all the communities through which the rights-of-ways are located. Municipalities, however, have most of this information readily available, and the particular knowledge with which to better certify the sensitive areas in their communities. Therefore, the Department requests and urges the assistance of the "affected" municipalities in reviewing the completeness and accuracy of the maps contained in the submitted document. The DAR has established the following procedures for this review.

Yearly Operational Plans (YOP's) and a copy of this notice will be sent by the applicant to the Conservation Commission, Board of Health (or designated health agent) and to the head of government (mayor, city manager, chair of the board of selectmen) of each municipality where herbicides are to be applied along the rights-of-ways during the calendar year 2013. Municipal agencies and officials will have forty-five (45) days following receipt of the YOP to review the maps contained in the document that indicate the location of "sensitive areas not readily identifiable in the field" for inaccuracies and omissions. "Sensitive areas" will be defined as in Section 11.02, and exclude wetlands which are to be delineated "in the field" as described in the applicant's approved Vegetation Management Plan (VMP).

Municipal agencies and officials are requested to forward the YOP to the appropriate official(s) in the municipality qualified to certify the accuracy of sensitive area locations as indicated on the maps. The maps should be corrected and returned to the applicant, also a copy of the maps with these corrections indicated should be sent to the DAR to the addressed listed below, within the forty-five day review period. If a city or town needs more time to carry out this review, it should send a written request for an extension to the DAR and cite why there is "good cause" for requesting additional time.

All corrections will be required to be made by the applicant, and corrected maps sent back to the city/town before the YOP can be considered "approved" by the Department for vegetation maintenance in that municipality. Any dispute on the part of the applicant regarding corrections made by municipal authorities should be indicated in writing to the Department and to the city/town which requested the disputed changes within fifteen (15) days of receipt of that request. The Department will decide whether or not the YOP should be approved without the requested changes. The DAR will consider the "final approval" of the YOP individually for each municipality.

A failure by the city/town to respond to the applicant's submission of this YOP within the forty-five day public review period will be considered by the DAR to indicate agreement by municipal officials with the sensitive area demarcations as provided by the applicant in their YOP.

Any questions or comments on the information provided in this Notice and the procedures established for the municipal review as outlined above should be addressed to:

Rights-of-Way Program
Pesticide Bureau
Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
251 Causeway Street, Suite 500
Boston, MA 02114

Any additional questions or comments on any information provided as part of the proposed YOP should be addressed in writing to:

Anthony W. Johnson, III
Manager—Transmission Vegetation Management
Northeast Utilities
P. O. Box 270
Hartford, CT 06141-0270

A copy should also be sent to the Rights-of-Way Program at the above address.

COMMENT PERIOD ENDS AT THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS ON January 18, 2013